

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I really need a permit to film inside the City of Wilmington?

Yes! The City's Guidelines for Filming state that a filming permit is required for any filming activity taking place within Wilmington's city limits, whether on public or private property, excluding Screen Gems Studio.

Even a small independent film?

Especially for a small independent film. Small films fall prey to many of the same pitfalls and problems as larger films, and going through the permitting process can help you avoid many headaches and costly mistakes that must be budgeted for. This allows us to help you ensure that filming goes smoothly.

What does it cost to get a film permit?

Nothing. Film permits from the City of Wilmington are absolutely free!

What do I need to do to get a filming permit?

Read the [City's Guidelines for Filming](#), then call our office to make an appointment to talk about your film. We recommend that you print a copy of the guidelines for your own reference. At our meeting you will be provided with a copy of the Application for for Filming Permit form. It is also useful that you bring with you a list of your anticipated locations. As soon as you have decided on tentative filming dates, contact our office. Two weeks minimum notice is suggested because there may be other productions whose dates may conflict with yours. We will be more than happy to help you in your planning. We also suggest that you be as specific as possible when you fill out your application, especially where parking is concerned. This allows us to issue you a permit that truly reflects the needs of your production. You will also need to have a certificate of insurance and may be required to make a security deposit depending on the size and scope of your production. Insurance and deposits for independent films are generally lower than those of feature films or television productions. We will work with you to determine what is needed for your production.

How long does this process take?

That depends on the scope of your application, whether it's high impact or low impact, and on how complete your application is. A low impact application that has all needed information can often be issued on the same day it is received. A high impact application that requires some help from this office or requests special City services such as police, fire, alteration of public property, or removal of street signs, may take 2-3 days to allow us time to contact the involved departments.

To what does a film permit entitle me?

The agreed upon permit is final and will guarantee you to the provisions mentioned therein. For this reason, it is important to be as specific as possible on your application and to have considered your location from all angles. Having a film permit for a specific location does not entitle you to suddenly move the camera to the other end of the block, to stop traffic, to close down a sidewalk or divert pedestrian traffic, or to trespass on private property or film a private residence or business without the owner's permission. These are things that you must plan in advance, clear with this office, and affected parties.

How much does it cost to film in a City park or a City owned building?

There is no charge to film in any City owned park or building, though there may be a building attendant fee if you film after normal staff hours. Many parks take reservations for picnic shelters and athletic fields and for other public events, so be sure that you've checked to make sure the area you want is available on the date and time requested. City Hall and other City office buildings are generally not available during normal business hours, but recreation centers can often be more flexible. Street closures are also free, though you may be required to have a police officer on site. Please remember that any time you plan to hold traffic you must have police officers on hand.

Where do I find information concerning locations, crew, equipment, stages, and other resources?

The Wilmington Regional Film Commission, Inc. The Film Commission facilitates on-location filmmaking within the region by offering production of companies a complete range of pre-production services through a central contact. The Film Commission also serves as a general resource and clearinghouse for information about the Wilmington region and can assist with the following services: location photography, location library, regional scouting services, liaison with federal, state, county, and city agencies, and logistical information (crew, equipment, stages, talent, & support services).

You may contact the Wilmington Regional Film Commission by writing or calling:

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Wilmington Regional Film Commission, Inc.
1223 N. 23rd Street
Wilmington, NC 28405
Tel (910) 343-3456
Fax (910) 343-3457
e-mail: commish@wilmington-film.com
website: <http://www.wilmington-film.com/>

Other useful websites for local filming:

EUE Screengems Studios: www.screengemsstudios.com

North Carolina Film Commission: <http://www.ncfilm.com/>